OTTAWA ROOFING PRO

Hiring & Quotes

Choosing a roofer in Ottawa: what the non-compulsory Roofer trade means, WSIB and Working at Heights questions to ask, what a written quote should include, and comparing quotes

4 Expert Answers from Roofing IQ

ottawaroofingpro.ca/construction-brain

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Q1

Roofer pressures me to sign today in Barrhaven, what to do?

A roofer who says the price disappears tonight is using a pressure tactic. Ontario law gives you a cooling-off right, and you do not need to decide on the spot.

Your legal right to cancel

If a roofer came to your home and you signed a quote at your kitchen table, that agreement is likely a "direct agreement" under the Consumer Protection Act, 2002. For any amount over $50, the written contract must include a fair description of the work, the total price, the payment terms, and an itemized list of prices including taxes. Once you receive that written copy, you have 10 days to cancel without giving any reason at all. If you never received a proper written copy, that window extends to one year. The 10-day right exists whether or not the roofer told you about it.

If the quote includes an estimate rather than a fixed price, the same Act says the final charge cannot be more than 10 per cent above that estimate. Get the scope of work in writing before anything starts.

The Construction Act requires an owner to hold back 10 per cent of the price as work is supplied. For a larger job, ask a lawyer about when to release it.

Before signing anything, check whether the contractor has current WSIB coverage. You can search the contractor's clearance on the WSIB website. If you live in the home yourself, you are not required to obtain that clearance, but you can still look it up. Working at Heights training for the crew is the employer's legal duty under O. Reg. 297/13; you can ask whether it is current.

None of this means the quote is bad. But a fair contractor will put the full scope in writing and give you time to read it. If someone refuses to leave a written quote, that itself is useful information.

A few things worth doing before you respond to the pressure: ask for the written contract to take overnight, compare it against at least one other quote, and check that the scope covers tear-off layers, eave protection, flashing, ventilation, sheathing replacement priced per square foot, and disposal. The City of Ottawa's list names installing asphalt shingles as work that does not need a building permit, though heritage-designated properties are not exempt; if the job involves structural work or a material change, confirm with the City first.

When you sit down with two written quotes side by side, line up what each one says about the number of layers being torn off, whether eave protection is included and how far up the slope it runs, what flashing work is covered, what ventilation changes are proposed, how rotten sheathing will be priced if it turns up at tear-off, and who handles disposal and at what cost.

Q2

Checking online reviews before hiring an Ottawa roofer, enough?

Online reviews are a useful starting point, but they leave out most of what you actually need to know before handing someone a deposit for a roofing job.

Reviews tell you whether past customers were happy with the experience. They do not tell you whether the crew had fall protection in place, whether the quote covered eave protection as the 2024 Ontario Building Code requires, whether the company carries its own WSIB coverage, or whether the written contract meets the Consumer Protection Act, 2002.

Here is what to check beyond the reviews:

- WSIB clearance. You can search the contractor's current clearance on the WSIB website. A clearance is valid for up to 90 days. For a rental or investment property the homeowner exemption does not apply, so this step is especially important there.
- Working at Heights training. Under O. Reg. 297/13, the employer must ensure workers who may use fall arrest or travel restraint have completed an approved Working at Heights training program, valid for three years. You can ask whether the crew's training is current.
- Fall protection. O. Reg. 213/91 requires fall protection where a worker may fall more than 3 metres. Ask how the crew handles this on your roof.
- A written contract. If the quote is signed at your kitchen table it is likely a direct agreement under the Consumer Protection Act, 2002. It must be in writing, signed by both parties, and include a fair description of the work, the total payable, payment terms, and an itemized price list including taxes. You have 10 days to cancel after receiving that written copy. If the agreement includes an estimate, the supplier cannot charge more than 10 per cent above it.
- The Construction Act holdback. The Construction Act requires an owner to hold back 10 per cent of the price of services and materials as they are supplied. On a larger job, ask a lawyer about release timing.
- What the quote actually covers. A complete quote for shingle replacement should spell out tear-off, eave protection (the 2024 Ontario Building Code, Div. B, 9.26.5.1., requires it to run at least 900 mm up the slope to a line at least 300 mm inside the inner face of the exterior wall), flashing, ventilation, any sheathing replacement priced separately per square foot, and disposal. Published Ottawa-area quotes for a typical house with one-layer tear-off run about $8,000 to $22,000; sheathing found rotten at tear-off runs about $3 to $6 per square foot as an extra.

Skilled Trades Ontario notes that Roofer is a non-compulsory trade, so a certificate is optional and holders do not appear on its public register. We found no Ontario or City of Ottawa licence for roofing contractors. That leaves the

WSIB search and the written contract as two things you can check yourself.
You can request a match with local roofing contractors through the form on this page; they are listed in the Ottawa Construction Network directory.

Before you sign, search the roofer's current WSIB clearance and to confirm in writing exactly what the quoted price includes if rotten sheathing turns up at tear-off.

Q3

Roofer from Gatineau working in Ottawa: anything different?

The rules this site explains are Ontario's and the City of Ottawa's, and they are the ones your Ottawa roof job is measured against, wherever the roofer is based. Quebec rules differ for work done in Quebec.

What changes when the roofer crosses the river

The 2024 Ontario Building Code (O. Reg. 163/24) governs the work regardless of where the contractor is based. That means the Code's material standards, slope requirements, eave protection rules and fastening requirements all apply. The 2024 Ontario Building Code (Div. B, 9.26.5.1.) requires eave protection on shingle, shake or tile roofs running at least 900 mm up the roof slope to a line not less than 300 mm inside the inner face of the exterior wall. That rule applies whether the crew drove from Gatineau or Kanata.

On permits: the City of Ottawa's list of projects not requiring a building permit names installing asphalt shingles. That exemption still applies, but the work must still conform to the Ontario Building Code and any applicable law. For metal roofing, flat-roof membrane replacement or a material switch, confirm with the City of Ottawa before work starts. Heritage-designated properties and properties in a Heritage Conservation District are not covered by the exemption regardless of material.

On trade status: Roofer is a non-compulsory trade in Ontario under the Building Opportunities in the Skilled Trades Act, 2021. A Certificate of Qualification is optional. We found no Ontario or City of Ottawa licence for roofing contractors or companies.

On WSIB: we found no source on how WSIB treats a company based outside Ontario, so ask the roofer and WSIB directly. The homeowner exemption, which means you are not required to obtain a WSIB clearance for your own home, covers the home you live in. You can still search the contractor's current clearance online; a clearance is valid for up to 90 days. If the property is a rental or investment property, the homeowner exemption does not apply.

On fall protection: O. Reg. 213/91 sets fall-protection rules for workers who may fall more than 3 metres, and O. Reg. 297/13 requires employers to ensure workers who use fall protection have approved Working at Heights training. You can ask whether the crew's training is current.

On consumer protection: the Consumer Protection Act, 2002 applies to the contract. If the quote is signed at your kitchen table, it is likely a direct agreement and must be in writing, signed by both parties, with an itemized price list including taxes. You have 10 days to cancel after receiving a proper written copy.

The Construction Act requires an owner to hold back 10 per cent of the price of services and materials as they are supplied; ask a lawyer about release timing on a larger job.

Ask the roofer directly about WSIB coverage for work in Ontario, and if anything structural or non-shingle is involved, start with the City of Ottawa's Building Code Client Service Centre, because that is the office that decides whether your specific job needs a permit before a nail goes in.

Q4

Roofer wants to start tomorrow in Nepean, should I wait?

Whether you should wait depends on what work is being done and whether you have a written agreement in hand.

For a straight asphalt shingle replacement in Nepean, the City of Ottawa lists installing asphalt shingles among the projects that do not need a building permit. The 2024 Ontario Building Code (Div. B, 9.26.1.2.) still applies: the work must shed water, prevent moisture entry and limit ice-dam ingress, permit or not. If the job involves structural repairs, a new skylight opening, metal roofing or switching from one material type to another, confirm with the City of Ottawa before work starts, because the City's exemption names asphalt shingles only.

The more pressing question is whether your paperwork is in order. Under the Consumer Protection Act, 2002, if a roofer quoted you at your home, that agreement is likely a direct agreement. For anything over $50 it must be in writing, signed by both parties, and include a fair description of the work, the total price, payment terms and an itemized list with taxes. You have 10 days to cancel after receiving that written copy. If the quote includes an estimate, the final charge cannot exceed it by more than 10 per cent. Do not let work begin if you do not have a signed written contract in hand.

A few other things worth confirming before tomorrow:

- Ask whether the quote covers tear-off, eave protection membrane, flashing, ventilation work and disposal, or whether any of those are extras.
- Ask the price per square foot for replacing rotten sheathing found at tear-off, since published quotes price it as an extra.
- Search the contractor's current WSIB clearance online. The homeowner exemption covers the home you live in, not a rental or investment property.
- Ask whether the crew's Working at Heights training is current. That duty sits with the employer under O. Reg. 297/13, but you can ask.

If your home is designated under the Ontario Heritage Act or sits in a Heritage Conservation District, talk to the City's heritage planners before any roofing work begins, because the permit exemption does not apply to designated properties.

Before the crew arrives tomorrow, take a look from the attic: check for daylight through the sheathing, damp or compressed insulation, frost on the underside of the sheathing, and whether the soffit vents are blocked. Those observations will help you have a specific conversation with the roofer about what they find when they pull the old shingles.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Ottawa Roofing Pro. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified contractors and your local building authority (the City of Ottawa or your own municipality) before starting any roofing project, and do not go on a roof yourself. Roofing work in Ontario must meet the 2024 Ontario Building Code (O. Reg. 163/24). Information is current as of November 15, 2026 and may change. Visit **ottawaroofingpro.ca** for the latest answers.